

Another tortricid not listed for Monmouthshire by Horton (*op. cit.*) is *Epiphyas postvittana* (Walker). This is now an ubiquitous species in suburban settings in South Wales and is common in gardens and parkland in Newport.

On 15 July 1999, I attended a CAWN moth trapping event at a site known as Solutia, south-east of Newport at grid reference ST 341851. Four specimens of *Calamotropha paludella* (Hb.) were captured at this meeting, new to Gwent and possibly new to Wales. The identification was confirmed by Ray Barnett at Bristol Museum from a voucher specimen retained. Kevin Dupe subsequently captured *C. paludella* at two other sites in Newport: twelve came to a Heath actinic trap at Hartridge Flood Lagoon (ST 348876) and a further twenty to a similar trap at Duffryn Pond (ST 294846). Brian Slade (*Ent. Rec.* 111: 210), reporting the recent discovery of this species in Somerset and Gloucestershire, suggests that it has undergone an expansion in range in this part of the country, but the number of specimens taken this year in Gwent also suggest that whilst *paludella* could be a fairly new addition to the county fauna it may already be well-established.

From the 15 July meeting, I identified two further species apparently new to Vice-county 50. The first was *Paraswammerdamia atricapitella* (Scharfenberg), of which several specimens were netted at dusk as they took flight from the blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* hedge surrounding the site. The second was *Limnaecia phragmitella* (Stt.). This proved to be abundant at Solutia, Hartridge Flood Lagoon and Duffryn Pond, but was first captured at a further site – Gaer Pond (ST 296865), north-west of Newport, on 6 July 1999.

Presumably, these species listed above, with the exception of *C. paludella* and perhaps *E. postvittana*, are all long-term residents of the county that had been previously overlooked. This view is supported by the fact that the Bulrush Wainscot *Nonagria typhae* (Thunb.), previously only recorded in Magor Marsh (a prime site much visited by local moth recorders), also proved to be resident at the largely unexplored Hartridge Flood Lagoon, Duffryn Pond and Gaer Pond sites. It seems likely that continuing survey work Newport, and Monmouthshire as a whole, may reveal a considerable number of new (or at least newly-recorded) species, particularly of the smaller moths.— MARTIN J. WHITE, 8 St Nicholas Square, Maritime Quarter, Swansea SA1 1UG.

### ***Abraxas sylvata* (Scop.) (Lep.: Geometridae) in the London Area**

The assessment of this species' status in the London area by Plant (*Larger Moths of the London Area*, 1993) is that it was an extremely local and former resident, and he quotes only one record for the period 1980 to 1991. Nevertheless it seems certain that one former flourishing colony in the Kent portion of the London area has survived, even if considerably reduced in size, and now existing on short-lived regenerating growth replacing the wych elm *Ulmus glabra* trees killed by dutch elm disease (Paul Sokoloff, *pers. comm.*).

My garden m.v. light in Dartford has attracted three male specimens, all in very good condition, since 1969, on 5.vii.1971, and, of more interest, two recent records

on 24.vii.1996 and 5.vii.1999. One is tempted to suggest that one or more of these casual specimens perhaps emanated from this relict colony only eight miles distant. The Joydens Wood wych elms which hosted a thriving colony of white-letter hairstreaks *Strymonidia w-album* Knoch into the 1950s have left no regenerating growth, the site being occupied by well-tended gardens.— B.K. WEST, 36 Briar Road, Dartford, Kent DA5 2HN.

#### **Dewick's *Plusia Macdunnoughia confusa* (Steph.) (Lep.; Noctuidae) in the "London Area"**

John Muggleton's record of this migrant species at Staines on 10 October 1999 (*Ent. Rec.* **111**:260) may well be new to VC 21, but it is not the first record for the "London Area" (i.e. the London Natural History Society recording area). A specimen was taken by Colin Hart at Buckland, Surrey on 20 August 1992, a site on the extreme southern boundary of the area described above. The specimen was exhibited at the annual exhibition of the BENHS (although not until 1993 and hence too late for inclusion in Colin Plant's book *Larger Moths of the London Area*, published that same year). It is listed in Collins (1997, *Larger Moths of Surrey*).— GRAHAM A. COLLINS, 15 Hurst Way, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 7AP.

#### ***Ennomos autumnaria* (Wern.) (Lep.: Geometridae) in north-west Kent**

A slightly worn male specimen of *E. autumnaria* visited my garden m.v. light on 2.ix.1999. I have, previously, only seen it on 23.ix.1969 and 25.ix.1972, when the species was a familiar resident of this area, and elsewhere in Kent. At that period, it was frequently seen at street lights, but appears to have been absent from the county for the past twenty-five years except for a very occasional immigrant on the coast.

With *autumnaria* long absent as a resident species in Kent, the Dartford specimen is unlikely to have originated in the county, nor in Surrey from where it is also unknown (Collins, *Larger Moths of Surrey*, 1997). However, a possible source is south-west Essex, directly opposite across the Thames, where for a number of years *autumnaria* has maintained a resident population (Plant, *Larger Moths of the London Area*, 1993).

This seems a more plausible explanation than immigration from the continent which is sporadic only.— B.K. WEST, 36 Briar Road, Dartford, Kent DA5 2HN.

#### **The Willow Ermine *Yponomeuta rorrella* (Hb.) (Lep.: Yponomeutidae) at Old Hall Marsh, Essex**

On 1 May 1999, whilst searching a hedgerow for Lepidoptera larvae and weevils at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds' nature reserve at Old Hall Marsh, Essex, I found a number of webs containing Yponomeutid larvae. Not being certain precisely which species was involved, I took away a few of the larvae, which pupated almost immediately. When the first moth emerged in early June I provisionally named it as *Yponomeuta rorrella* (Hb.); this was later confirmed by Brian Goodey, the Essex macro-Lepidoptera Recorder for the Essex Field Club.